

FIELD



FIELD

CONTEMPORARY POETRY AND POETICS

NUMBER 3

—

FALL 1970

PUBLISHED BY OBERLIN COLLEGE
OBERLIN, OHIO

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FIELD is published twice yearly by Oberlin College.

Subscriptions: \$3.00 a year / \$5.00 for two years / Single issues \$1.50 postpaid.

Subscription orders and manuscripts should be sent to: FIELD, Rice Hall, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio 44074. Manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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PIERROT LE FOU

1.

Suppose you stood facing
a wall
 of photographs
from your unlived life

as you stand looking at these
stills from the unseen film?

Yourself against a wall
curiously stuccoed

Yourself in the doorway
of a kind of watchman's hut

Yourself at a window
signalling to people
you haven't met yet

Yourself in unfamiliar clothes
with the same eyes

2.

On a screen as wide as this, I grope for the titles.
I speak the French language like a schoolgirl of the 'forties.
Those roads remind me of Beauce and the motorcycle.
We rode from Paris to Chartres in the March wind.
He said we should go to Spain but the wind defeated me.
France of the superhighways, I never knew you.
How much the body took in those days, and could take!
A naked lightbulb still simmers in my eyeballs.
In every hotel, I lived on the top floor.

3.

Suppose we had time
and no money
living by our wits
 telling stories
Which stories would you tell?

I would tell the story
of Pierrot Le Fou
who trusted
 not a woman
 but love itself
till his head blew off
not quite intentionally

I would tell all the stories I know
in which people went wrong
but the nervous system

was right all along

4.

The island blistered our feet.
At first we mispronounced each others' names.
All the leaves of the trees were scribbled with words.
There was a language there but no one to speak it.
Sometimes each of us was alone.
At noon on the beach our shadows left us.
The net we twisted from memory kept on breaking.
The damaged canoe lay on the beach like a dead animal.
You started keeping a journal on a coconut shell.

5.

When I close my eyes
other films
 have been there all along

a market shot:
bins of turnips, feet
of dead chickens

close-up: a black old woman
buying voodoo medicines

a figure of terrible faith
and I know her needs

Another film:
 an empty room stacked with old films
I am kneeling on the floor
it is getting dark
 they want to close the building
and I still haven't found you

Scanning reel after reel
tundras in negative,
the Bowery
 all those scenes
but the light is failing
 you are missing

from the footage of the march
the railway disaster
the snowbound village
even the shots of the island
miss you
 yet you were there

6.

To record
in order to see

if you know how the story ends
why tell it

To record
in order to forget

the surface is always lucid
my shadows are under the skin

To record
in order to control

the eye of the camera
doesn't weep tears of blood

To record
for that is what we do

climbing your stairs, over and over
I memorized the bare walls

This is my way of coming back

6 STANZAS FROM A DREAM

Waking up,
I could still hear the sound . . .
The tone
was unmistakable — it
was a man in the desert tapping
a small hammer on a railroad track.
He looks almost
like a monk: hunched over
the rail, the light silver of the hammer,
the canteen beside him — filled
with salt.

The clearest tone occurred
when he struck the rail directly
in the center.
When he did this, when
the tone was perfect,
he would stop
and take a long drink from his canteen.
He would pour it over his head!
The way he exulted — I knew
he wasn't a monk.

What you have heard is not true.
In the desert
the mirage and the oasis are the same.
It has to do with your eyes.
Walk into a mirage, an oasis.
Notice the lizard. He blinks,
secreting an oil.

This is what I'm trying to say:
your eyes for his!
You are now unable to leave
without first giving up your eyelids,
you must learn to drag
certain parts of your body everywhere. . . .

There are other things about the desert.
For example,
the pack rat who steals a shiny button
from a dead man's shirt
doesn't hide it deep in his burrow.
No, he sets it by the entrance
so the sun will hit it.
He thinks of it as a jewel!
At night, when he passes by it,
he glances into his dark shape.

And imagine a cactus
with a white spigot.
There is one like this not far from the man.
I can still see him.
He is tapping the rail.
I can hear this perfectly.

The tracks!
The tracks could be described
as the heel marks of a man
who was killed and dragged away.
Moonlight comes down
and fills the gouges his heels make . . .
Whatever they are,
stretching out as they do,
getting whiter and smaller,
they look *exactly* like railroad tracks.

THE FISHERMAN'S PANTS

When I go fishing I bring with me a cellophane bag, usually a carrot bag, because they're long enough to tie around my belt. If I catch some fish the bag slaps against my leg as I walk home. Later, when I take the fish out of the bag, their backs are stiff and arched to fit the curve of my leg. Each fish fits my leg so well that I make a pair of pants out of them! I dream of sinking deep under the banks, the pale bellies of water snakes gliding above me . . . But when I go outside I'm immediately noticed. People say, "Look, here comes Fish Man." The market place is agog! There is nothing for me to do but throw my pants back in the river. They were made of the warm, dark-water fish, and they were the only things I knew not born of the sandpits! When they're gone underwater I turn and wave to the townspeople who have gathered on the hill. A few of them, the ones carrying gallons of kerosene, wave back.

POEM

I am the knife that cuts
the diver's oxygen line.
He swims wildly
to reach air
before his lungs explode.
At the same time,
a tiny, black submarine
is diving toward the root
of his brain.
I am that knife also.

THE MAN WHO WANTED FINALLY TO BE ALONE

Rented cars are parked all over my lawn.
A man with a flashlight
is checking the back seats — he says
he is searching for the small animals
he dreamed were hiding there . . .
When he finds something he knocks it out
with a croquet mallet
and then lines it up with the others
on the hood of a white Cadillac.
Inside, my friends
and my guests are sitting under
the tables and chairs.
I say at least they've got someone
to talk to: themselves,
their voices buried deep in the rug.
I'm in the garage drinking alone.
I can't go inside —
whenever I smash a wineglass
against the mantle I find
myself sneaking back later
to gather up the pieces,
to stuff my mattress with them. . . .

THINKING ABOUT BIRDS

Why is it your birds just move away?
Mine have to be driven out
by stringing chicken-wire
across their corners. I can climb
an aluminum ladder high up under the lip
of the slate roof and do the job
in about 10 minutes.
Sometimes, if this happens
when they are flying against the wind,
they can't sense it.
They come back later, locked out,
and watch their eggs freeze.

I'm in the attic now
listening to their wings banging
against the walls.
It is like the sound of horses,
somewhere far off,
running across a dry plateau.
Each rider is clutching
a huge flagon of oil.
Each rider is wearing a cape
made of black feathers.
They have been galloping many days . . .
Suddenly, I feel as drowsy
as a fly in winter.
I have so many eyes
my head is dragging on the floor!
It takes me an hour to crawl down the stairs —

KICKING IN THE BEARS

for James Randall

In the spring we'd put hamburgers
on the high banks of the Rattlesnake
and then kick the bears into the water
as they came to feed.
Often, we could kick in
two or three at a time.
They were that slow. They'd get dragged
out into the rapids and barge
against the rocks, breaking apart
like boats full of women and children.
Later, downstream,
we'd lie on our bellies
and drink from the river — our hands
stitched to our backs.
We'd sit all afternoon
and watch the fish
struggling in their own hair, to swim.

STONE

for Charles Simic

The creek has made its bed
and wants to lie in it.
That's why spring is terrifying.
Water rises like the bloated drowned
against the ice. In the churn
new stones are born
stunned.

Everything I could see was stone
one summer night.
There was the house, rising
like a cliff of stiff fire.
There were the trees, mobiles
of shale, and the grass
like a field of tiny gravestones growing wild.
And the moon, a stone fruit
hoping to be opened,
its 28 sections of stolen light
flying home.

In the streambed, a stone
shaped by watersurge:
it looks like the ankle bone
of a lost species grown too graceful.
Evolution makes us sleek
for the long flight.
Finally our common life breaks open,
a pod releasing its stone peas,
and the earth bears in a few places
a few wrinkles in our shapes
for a few million years.

SNOW

The dog's spine, like a dolphin's,
sews a path
through the smaller drifts.
These graying roadside lumps,
like sheets waiting to be washed. . . .
You have to press 4,000 snowgrapes
for one bottle of this winter light.
A white moss girdles
every tree.

 All the erased
roads lead north, into the wind.
The house is a sack of sour breath
on the earth's back.
Glass drumskins
in the windows quiver.

I stare in a stupor of will,
fleck-faced, bearing my cow of a body
easily on the earth.
Intricate adjustments in my inner ears
and the gravitational habits of planets
keep me steady.
It's nothing personal, I know,
but so much basic work is being done for me
I ought to stop whining.

Sky shreds,
woods fade
like an old grainy photograph.
Slick white gearwheels mesh
and turn:

which is what makes the hiss.
It is the suck and sigh
of shattered air
hoping to be ocean.
It is the glut of snow that I love.
A snowpelt
grows on the mailbox, the Volvo, the dog.
When I turn up
my eyes, my snow
rises to meet the snow.

A BLIZZARD

Blizzard in the air,
steam on the window.

All I can see of her
is knees and yellow hair
blowing with the snow.

SIOUX RIVER

The shaded water is clear and dark.
A gray stick nods in the current.
Three feet from my eyes a fish swims in place,
utterly remote.
I have no violence, no cleverness, no depth,
only this curious quietude.

STUMP FARMING

Digging through these hills,
past things dying back;
and pieces of bone,
bears sleeping
when the rivers ran down —
everywhere, the stumps of trees
sinking in the slow mud.

Farming. Farming
between these stumps. Stumps
becoming centers, seats
to pass the time.

It happened this way —
an Ojibway working lumber
out of Au Sable said
one night the trees got cold
and shrunk back to seed.

No, it happened this way —
in Ohio, going back
to beginnings, a seed
with the wind
sucked out, before the sun.

There are rumors of voices
rising out of these stumps,
the way smoke rises
out of old mines,
a knowledge in these stubs
of dead tongues; but I am tired
and pass the time.

From "FRONTIER"

hotspur,

a cross-grained shirt

thwartways, ole fire-eater.

an iron for forming the ring
at the mouth of bottles.

But a man gets
used to a pair of
handcuffs on his hip.

“The creek away up
thar turkey-tails
out into numerous
leettle forks”

brabble, just run-in into.

manganese brown.

set afloat bedstraw,

stirrup & tilt.

although the organs (pinion spur) were
similar.

leather joints,

He was embedded in the earth.

a precipice on its hind legs

old mossback drivelers bartered the code.

tile red

fastening

and a cane chair for his visitor
full to the brim.

tack raw umber cardboard

to their bandages.

a flock

one-eye buntings

, the posse.

It was twenty mile
but I had my truck.

ana

each with his roundup arrows

a holiday, nip up the
thin pages from his trunk
fork out the miniatures, grisaille.

re dust.

The medieval man had time for

Rubbing his chin. Oh?

off-site wheels, they . . . triangular.

like a dexter wedge,
eccentric, you know.

sepia beacon.

zinc lone prairie.

-
1. A wicker trap used in bird hunting,
over a rabbit. He points his spear at
a unicorn below.
 2. Within the initial a monster-
woman is playing the cymbals.
In the right margin a
boy whips a top
-

VASKO POPA

There is a kind of primitive genesis atmosphere about Popa's poetry. It is as if we were beginning again. Each object has to be looked at and examined once more. For Popa this is exactly the situation in the which the contemporary poet finds himself. The aim here is to discover natural symbols which would allow the poet to communicate his vision of the world without having to rely on abstract language.

The language of the poet is therefore direct and simple. It is rooted in some of the deepest currents of his native idiom, what another great Serbian poet has called "my mother's melody." The poems are usually set in cycles. They have the hypnotic quality of incantations. Their severity and purity is that of riddles and proverbs.

Popa was born in 1922. His first book *Crust* came out in 1953. His next book *The Field of Sleeplessness* was published in 1956. Both volumes already contain all the characteristics we usually associate with Popa's work. After twelve years of silence he came out with *Secondary Heaven* in 1968. The cycle *The Homage to the Lamé Wolf* included here is from the still unpublished book *Wolf's Bread*, which will consist of seven cycles of poems dealing with the lame wolf, the old forgotten Serbian tribal god.

Obviously Popa works very slowly. Everything in his poetry has been earned by great patience. Each cycle represents a completely original and inevitable departure. The impulse behind these cycles, as a number of critics have noted, is toward the epic. In a way, Popa's entire work can be taken as one long poem.

This is a rigorous, almost classical conception of poetry, yet its solutions are clearly of this age. Its strength lies in its complete inevitability. It has the tension, mystery and immediacy of a knife held in one's hand.

HOMAGE TO THE LAME WOLF

1

Go back to your lair
Humiliated lame wolf

And there sleep
Until the barking turns to ice
And the curses rust and the torches die
Of the common hunt

Until everyone falls
Empty handed into himself
And bites his tongue in despair

And dogheaded tyrants with knives behind their ears
And hunters with genitals over their shoulders
And their wolf-eating dragons

On all fours I crawl before you
And howl in your glory
As into your great
Green ages

And I pray to you old lame god
Go back to your lair

2

I prostrate myself before you
Lame wolf

I lie between your statues
Mutilated and burning
And disguised as mud

I fall among them
With my face in your holy nettles
And together with them I burn

My mouth is full
Of their wooden flesh
And golden eyebrows

I prostrate myself before you
Give me a sign growl for me to rise
Lame wolf

3

Accept my pauper's gifts
Lame wolf

An iron lamb I bring on my back
A sip of mead in my mouth
For your jaws to amuse themselves

A bit of living water in my palm
To train yourself in miracles

And a wreath of iris
Plaited to the size of your head
To remind you of who you are

And a sample of the latest wolf-traps
For you to examine carefully

Accept my gifts
Do not scatter them with your divine tail
Lame wolf

4

Turn your eyes toward me
Lame wolf

Breathe on me with the fire from your mouth
To sing in the glory of your name
With the old mother-tongue of linden

Scratch on my forehead with your claws
Heavenly lines and notches so that I may become
The interpreter of your silence

And bite into my left hand
So that your wolves will bow to me
And elect me their shepherd

Turn your eyes toward me
Don't stare any more at your fallen statue
Lame wolf

5

Raise the stone from your heart
Lame wolf

Show me how you turn stone
Into sun-bearing cloud
And the cloud into a deer with golden horns

And if this doesn't tire you show me
How you turn the deer into white basil
And the basil into six-winged swallow

And point to me if you still remember
How you change the swallow into fire-snake
And the snake into precious stone

Raise the stone from your heart
And lay it down on mine
Lame wolf

6

Let me approach you
Lame wolf

Let me pluck
Three miraculous hairs
From your triangular head

Let me touch with a stick
The star on your forehead
The stone over your heart
The left and then the right ear

And let me kiss
The wounded holy paw
Resting on a cloud

Let me approach you
Don't scare me with your divine yawning
Lame wolf

Go back to your lair
Lame wolf

And sleep there
Until your fur changes
And new iron teeth grow

Sleep until the bones of my ancestors
Flower and branch out
And pierce the earth-crust

Sleep until your lair shakes
And tumbles down on your head

Sleep until your tribe
From the other side of heaven
Is awakened by this howling

Go back to your lair
I'll visit you and serve you in dreams
Lame wolf

translated by Charles Simic

TRAP

Field map
 rat holes
erased, stood
 still for a minute
peered at the white
 fields the mounds
that might be haystacks
 with hidden intruders
got the forefoot caught
 in a root looped
like a signature, called
 over a pasture
slowly being torn
 up, in the pale
moonrise shaped
 like a limb with five
twigs

VEGETABLE SLEEP

Came out at 4 a.m. into the garden
the lettuce was cold
had warts on the outer skin
shivered or my hand
wasn't used to the soil
as it bent down and dug
parted the grains exploded
frozen clumps followed
a narrow crevice for a while
lost tip skin
on the stones that repel growth
came out in the carrot
patch as a pale light
made the leaves tremble
together

THE GREAT BULBS

Each year
in the spring
I go home
and ask them:
"I have been away,
am I
overdue."

They are
sunk in soft chairs
where I left them,
the air
is dry and cool,
the room
is a root cellar.

I lift each one
to his feet.
Scales rustle.
I am peeling an onion
in winter
and I remember them
faintly:
their smells,
their must.

THREE FROM THE MARKET

1.

Come, radishes, rosy against your greens,
crisp when I am soft with weakness.

Oh what voluptuaries you are! yet
with the definitive sharpness of the scissors.

Ambition dances about you,
yet you are totally unmoved, like true

emissaries of red.

I, what there is of me, may be argued:
but you may not. Your whole self struts;
your leafiness flutters above your head
like a crown of doves.

No radish was ever terrified.

How you cheer me, strong souls for a dime.

2.

I count 12 sections
nearly always, or average,
and buy Coachella grapefruit just to tabulate
12 until my refrigerator rolls with them
like model atoms
whose number is 12.

That's magnesium
of the intense white light.
Grapefruit's white energetic light
befits it as a morning dish.
Count 12 in the morning
and half the day is light.

But have you seen them grow
in the mineral white deserts?
More light more light.
This is the composition of grapefruit:
34% rind, membrane, seeds;
the rest is light.

3.

O sad grapes,
sad as Chavez's eyes,
weighted with the very press
of holy tradition,

if I used to savor
even your rotting ones,
each with a different phase
of flavor

like waning moons,
you'll have to pardon me.
I must have known in my dreams
of the coming, voluntary

famine.

They say GI's have developed
a sudden taste for you,
O innocents.

But I imagine you on my table,
green on it, fresh and new.
Someday you will not need to bring with you
the knowledge of good and evil.

ECLIPSE

March 7, 1970

A few minutes past noon:
the birds begin their evening songs
and break for the trees;
the horse nods in its dimming stall.
Afraid of a truth that could blind,
I turn my cold shoulder to the sun
and catch its shadow in a cardboard box
as though it were some rare bug
about to be effaced by the moon's
slow thumb. To catalogue is not enough.
What did Adam know, naming the apple?
What do the astronomers suspect?
The sun like a swallowed sword
comes blazing back. It is not chaos
I fear in this strange dusk
but the inexplicable order of things.

DEATH'S BLUE EYED GIRL

for Elaine Coulter

When did the garden with its banked flowers
start to smell like a funeral chapel,
and the mild breeze passing our foreheads
to feel like the back of a nurse's hand
testing for fever? We used to be
immortal in our ignorance, sending
our kites up for the lightning, swimming
in unknown waters at night and naked.
Death was a kind of safety net to catch us
if we fell too far. Remember Elaine
standing in April, a child on one hip
for ballast, her head distracted with poems?
The magician waved and bowed, showed us his empty sleeves
and she was gone. The child was as amazed as we.

A FEW BROKEN WINDOWS

I was over at my father's last week
a little cabin
with a few broken windows
in the woods.

He cooked pea soup
in a rusted pot.
And we sipped it.
He asked me
how I liked it.
I said it was delicious
but he laughed
and asked me again.
I stayed silent this time.
He put his arm around me
and we went to bed quietly.

SOLDIERS

At first they do not speak
But stretch their legs out nervously apart,
Their heads as far back as the seats will let them go.
Then slowly they begin to lean and talk
With unaccustomed mildness.
After their cigarettes are out
They could be schoolboys musing over funnybooks,
Their lives at ease in the odor of vanilla.
No matter how they turn their faces
They are young.

As the train nears Charlottesville
The boy by the window goes to change his clothes.
Come back and out of uniform,
He rolls his cap and tucks it in his satchel
With a motion deft as his mother's
Spoonng the last lump of stuffing in the turkey.
He carries his body bravely in his real clothes
Like a child parading in the cast-offs
Of his father.

When the dark train slows again
He has been sleeping for an hour by his buddy.
Their heads fall awkwardly together
As the car jolts but they do not stir.
Surely they will waken when the whole train jumps
And lunges home.

1. ROAD HOUSE, SATURDAY NIGHT, MOMMA COMES
AFTER HER BOY THE BURLY BIKERIDER,
IN RAMBLER AMERICAN

Nobody hear her toot except him.
He keep quiet, nobody know maybe.
But he up and slam down bottle,
Shout, Go home goddamn you Momma!
He got sixteen inch biceps
He got black leather jacket with buckles.
He got big black stomping boots.
He got tattoos! Just shut up
Burly Bikerider and nobody know!
But she toot more, louder he shout.

Now why he do that, you reckon?

For all the boy scouts in the basements of Baptist churches.
For all the little league coaches and umpires.
For all the sheriffs in Florida.
For all the class presidents and parachutists.
For all the full dress Marine sergeants in post offices.
For all the poets and teachers and lonesome truckdrivers,
 coffee stops with magnetic dogs from the vending machine.
For all the drivers of souped-up GTOs named The Judge.
For all the pro football fans.
For all the Jewish doctors.
For all us who got our pictures in the paper, for all us who
 didn't.

We file out, form double line
From road house to Rambler American,
Raise cocks like sabers in ceremony,
And every time she toot we salute,
And every time he shout we salute,
And so there we are in tapestry forever, all us
Saturday night roadhouses lined up across America,
Wasting our substance in riotous living!

2. CAPTAIN KENTUCKY IS A BOMB SCARE IN PALO ALTO

In real life, Momma finally leave, and guess what,
The B.B. follow her right out of the parking lot
Into eternity yelling, Goddamn you Momma!
But in poem here he return to bar and grow long hair,
Get freaky glasses, go off to college, join SDS,
And Momma back home puts pepsodent in the cookie box
To send her son the revolutionary, she buy back linens
For him and his chick at white sale, she demonstrate for peace,
She nurse the sick, and when he scream about being
Co-opted at every turn, she understands,
And lets him turn her on.

Now why she do that, you reckon?

For all the family albums with dates beneath the pictures.
For all the women reading much read magazines at the
 hairdressers.
For all the gossips and gardeners and lady golfers.
For all the girl darkroom technicians.
For all the fat women named Norma.
For all the women in the liberation movement.
For all the secretaries named Mrs. Dubois.
For all the lady scholars in girls' schools.
For all the school teachers who take aspirin for arthritis.
For all the women who wear white socks to the supermarket.
For all those who took piano lessons, and all those who didn't.

So when she comes to see me
I paint over the graffiti in the john
But leave the American flag curtains,
And when she asks whether that's patriotic
I say, well, Momma, either it is or it isn't!
I'm a man now, Momma, and I'm so happy!

A TOAST

here's to the girl
in the high-heeled shoes
the dog in the manger the sparrow
who admitted everything the face
that sank a thousand ships
the village idiot the farmer's
daughter the good men who did not
come to the aid of their country
and Judas Iscariot

whose names are passwords
into the house of scandal
who caught the brass ring of guilt
and could never let go

I drink a toast to your silence

for you the clock on the tower
faces both ways
and every day the roller coaster
says here we go again

as my mistakes line up
in readiness
and I know I will need them
I look back and salute you
with your reasons

let my words be scars on the page
which each of us can translate
into his own pain
and enjoy it
enjoy it

I drink to your calumny
who had only one oar
and travelled in circles

you were there when they built
the sea of regret
and every night you return
to find it waiting

NOVELLA

In love (unless loved) is not *love*.

You're right: x needs,

with azure sparks down dazedly
drifting through vast night
long after —

the embrace of y to even
begin to become z.

To x alone
something else happens. Example:

a woman painter returns,
younger than she should be, from travels
in monotone countries

and on arrival, bandages of fatigue
whipped off her eyes,

instantly
looks, looks at whose shadow
first falls on her primed (primal) canvas
(all the soul she has left
for the moment) —

At once the light
(not the gray north of journeys)
colors him! Candle-gold,

yet not still, but shivering,
lit white flesh for her (who preferred brown)
and hair light oak or walnut
was mahogany on the dream-palette.

Setting to work, the painter
paints what she sees: the object
moves, her eyes change focus
faithfully, the nimbus
dances.

 All one year she paints:
the works are known later by titles —

'Fiery Clouds,' 'Alembic,' 'Du Bleu Noir,' 'The Burning-glass.'
Rectangles, ovals, all the landscapes are portraits,
x kneels at the feet of y, barbaric frankincense
enclouds her. But y, embarrassed,
and finally indifferent, turns
away. Talking (he is a poet)

talking, walking away, entering
a small boat, the middle distance,

sliding downstream away.
She has before her

a long scroll to paint on, but no room
to follow that river. The light's going.

'L'homme est un drôle de corps,
qui n'a pas son centre de gravité en lui- même,'
she reads, pages falling from trees
at need around her. She continues

to paint what she saw:

y is a brushstroke now
in furthest perspective, it hurts

the eyes in dusk to see it, no one,
indeed, will know that speck of fire

but x herself, who has not
(in this example) even begun to become

z, but remains
x, a painter; though not perhaps
unchanged. Older. We'll take

some other symbol to represent
that difference — a or o.

DRIVING UNTIL DARK

We two are in my car.
"Look at this!" you say: "look there . . .,"
polishing this hour.

Sails
of mist, of fine bleached linen, draw
threads of colour from the grass;
white waves
of small graves leap at their walls
in emptied fields. A horse
pearled with the mist — a cow —
slot into the window.
Now, you sleep. The tyres
go "fuss, fuss" along the road.

We dip and swerve until it's dark,
stop for a drink, swing over the hill
to a meadow of lights
twenty miles square.
Moorsides hide
behind the glare and lorries filled
with cigarettes, wool, scrap-iron, dirt
blaze on the hilltop where they cart
Yorkshire into Lancashire.

"I love you. May we build a life."
The valley writhes, its sides
spitting and hissing. We slide
like oysters down a throat to Manchester.

MEN AGAINST THE SKY

Across the Oregon plateau
I saw strange man-figures
made up from rivets and girders,
harnessed with cables;
tall, electric, burning
in the strong evening light,
they marched into the sunset.

Their outstretched arms were bearing
away the life of that country . . .
a scorched silence fell over
the shadowy red buttes
and sank forever
in a town with one long street.

In the night that followed,
blood drained from the chapped hands
of the ranchers
and their dustgrey women.

They left behind the smell
of sagebrush mixed with ashes,
black bands of cattle
quietly drifting,
a dry lake filling with moonlight,
and one old windmill,
its broken arms
clattering in the darkness.

THE EMBRACE

This song for you is full of shark,
this indiscretion, like graffiti,
is made public to please you. Fine lady,
can we come together, fish who rise
from prey, who scribble in the temporary
waters the line of greatest resistance?

After the first ear, I fainted.
Nobody wants you when you're down
and out. Clip the tender parts
together, they said. Joined. Holy
because married. Nobody escapes this life
together, who gets away from himself.

I suppose walking into water until too
late, I imagine the clothes neatly bent
in a nearby pile the body floats from.
I imagine the horror with which I find you,
discovering downstream the day before yesterday
how much you loved me to hold on to.

THE MAKING WAY

The husband's ribs like the tree
you might have lived under
give you protection everything comes through
whether solace or mercy,
whether relation of blood or word of mouth.
The ear is oppressed to be so cared for.

The crickets sing their rounds endlessly
until someone approaches.
Then, in the silence, there comes to say

There is an end to the random,
a moment which requires your departure.
You press your seal of goodbye against him.

O what will he do with small children,
or with no one to keep his company?
That's not what he affords
by letting you go, but bountiful harvest.
He doesn't fall, but bends a little;
he gives you a way to the light.

THE WILLING

I am not yet ready to die inside,
while the ash founds a society of its own
rooted in the clean dirt, while
the berry tree signals its neighborliness
and the weeping willow says "forgive."

Mister of the chapel, Mister of the steeple,
who says go there when the road is a ladder?
I have to take that promise myself
which ended for so many without flowering
and sit the branches and the buds through

storm of birth, whipping of circumstance,
lacerations like birthdays in the garden.
Surely foliage needs this beating of foliage
to aspire to: the winds effacing the trees,
the open spaces up ahead pleasing danger.

LABOR ROOM

for Peg and Heather

The sweep-hand
of the clock
winds up
its propeller.

Holding my hand,
you curl up
with your belly
and become my child.

You blanch;
the room is a fist,
vectors
of tension

catching . . . catching
the sprocket of breath
you ride out
as I hold your cry

inside my throat.
My love, my love
what have I done
I want to say

as you smile,
slope from pain
and open
your fist.

Between contractions
I stand on a high
deck and watch you bob.
You make a hammock

of the gulf
between waves.
Almost asleep there,
you cradle my hand,

turn white again
as my heart is rising,
rising against my ears
over my head.

Nurses in a flurry
of green say, look
father, she's crowning!
As they push you downhall

toward Delivery,
the empty labor room
keeps squeezing
about my head.

Sobs, sobs . . .
are they my own?
Stopped by a cry.
Not yours, not mine.

THE NEW YORKER HOME TREASURY OF VERSE

The New Yorker Book of Poems came the other day. Nine hundred poems, 835 pages, 3¼ pounds. And I had always thought *The New Yorker* exclusive.

A LUCKY GENERATION

"The poems of M---P--- speak with originality and power for the generation young enough to reject the bland fatuities of the middle-aged ---"

I pause for breath. I am middle-aged myself, or I was not long ago. If middle-age gives us bland fatuity, what about old age?

"The poems of M---P--- speak with originality and power for the generation young enough to reject the bland fatuities of the middle-aged, old enough to have achieved the firmness of full maturity."

What a happy age to be! What a lucky generation! But how long will this mature young poet be able to keep her balance before she too slips into bland fatuity herself?

TWO WORDS

Having heard time and again that "two words are not as good as one," I cannot refrain any longer from declaring this to be the precise opposite of the truth, at least as far as poetry is concerned. If poetry is the intensive interplay of words, then two words are the absolute minimum. One word cannot strike sparks from itself; it takes at least two for that. It takes two words lying side by side on the page to breed wonders.

HARDIHOOD

The following item appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* of July 5, 1968.

"The 1st Dorchester Scout Troop are making their own miniature contribution to the Hardy Festival which opens at Dorchester on Sunday. On Wednesday afternoon they are holding a 'world record event' in the shape of a non-stop reading of Thomas Hardy's [1000] poems."

FRANCIS

Francis Scott Key: The Star-Spangled Banner

Samuel Francis Smith: My Country 'Tis of Thee

Robert Churchill Francis:

SOME REMARKS ON "LITERATURE AND REALITY"

All the views that have been presented here* assume that we know what reality is. I have to say for myself that I do not know. That we have all come here to Vézelay, this room, this green tablecloth, all this seems very strange to me and hardly real.

We know there are colors we do not see, sounds we do not hear. Our senses are uncertain, and I must assume my brain is too. I suspect our discomfort with reality lies in what we call time. I find it absurd that the moment I am saying this already belongs to the past. I am incapable of accepting reality as it presents itself to us as reality.

On the other hand, I do not wish to play the fool who does not know he has bumped into a table. I am prepared to orient myself in this room. But I have the same sort of difficulties that a deaf and dumb blind man has.

Well, all right. My existence is an attempt of this kind: to accept reality sight unseen. Writing is also possible in these terms, but I am trying to write something that aims in another direction — I mean the poem.

I write poems to orient myself in reality. I view them as trigonometric points or buoys that mark the course in an unknown area. Only through writing do things take on reality for me. Reality is my goal, not my presupposition. First I must establish it.

I am a writer. Writing is not only a profession but also a decision to see the world as language. Real language is a falling together of the word and the object. Our task is to translate from the language that is around us but not "given." We are translating without the original text. The most successful translation is the one that gets closest to the original and reaches the highest degree of reality.

*At a conference on literature at Vézelay, France.

I must admit that I have not come very far along in this translating. I still am not beyond the "thing-word" or noun. I am like a child that says "tree," "moon," "mountain" and thus orients himself.

Therefore, I have little hope of ever being able to write a novel. The novel has to do with the verb, which in German is rightly called the "activity word." But I have not penetrated the territory of the verb. I shall still need several decades for the "thing-word" or noun.

Let us use the word "definition" for these trigonometric signs. Such definitions are not only useful for the writer but it is absolutely necessary that he set them up. In each good line of poetry I hear the cane of the blindman striking: I am on secure ground now.

I am not saying that the correctness of definitions depends on the length or brevity of texts. A novel of four hundred pages is likely to contain as many "definitions" as a poem of four lines. I would consider such a novel a poem.

Correctness of definition and literary quality are identical for me. Language begins where the translation approaches the original. What comes before this may be psychologically, sociologically, politically or any-cally interesting, and I shall gladly be entertained by it, admire it and rejoice in it, but it is not *necessary*. The poem alone is *necessary* for me.

translated by Stuart Frieibert

(Note: this talk by Eich was first published in *Akzente*, Jahrgang 3, 1956, No. 4, and we are grateful for the chance to reprint it.)

DEFINITIVE

And let the snow
come through the door-cracks,
the wind blows, that's his job.

And let Lena be forgotten,
a girl who drank
the spirits from the lamp.

Went into the il-
lustrations of Meyer's Lexicon,
Brehm's wildlife.

Intestines, mountainranges, beach carrion,
and let the snow
come through the door-cracks

up to the bed, up to the spleen,
where the memory sits,
where Lena sits

the leopard, the feverish gull,
arithmetic puzzles in yellow
wrappers, by subscription.

And let the wind blow
because that's all he can do
and don't begrudge Lena

one more swig from the lamp
and let the snow
come through the door-cracks.

BRICKWORKS BETWEEN 1900 AND 1910

1

Don't think back
over the bricks,
the wintering, blue tinges.
The measurements have survived
among the farmers,
a kind of legend,
that holds you from a distance,
a family of knowledge,
fruitful, astonished,
the ingenious
memory built into
overgrown ovens:
A horse
won in the lottery,
the brickmaker's sister,
winter workman,
something written in
indelible pencil
on the paving stones
of the stable passageway.

2

Stone loaves
shot through with air
sour by rain —
nobody's hunger,
nobody's red bread.
Grab the plains!
time belongs to the clay pits
a sour rain, a trace of
caraway, rinds
from pictures.

3

Unbalanced budget.
A year of defective tiles.
Who can break even
in this short life
when the limbs
swell up with water
and you look helplessly
at the tar-covered trellises,
at the canaries
that die carelessly
in the closing door?

4

Icelandic moss,
a word whispered
in hearing tests
understood
from two meters.

A precise dryness
behind the Wendic graves,
a region that becomes
audible under
the paws of a mongrel.

A precise
Icelandic
regional word, all that
is nothing but future Wendic
moss
among us dogs,
among us graves
audibly grayed
dry whispering pawed.

Dachshunds,
a huge white horse,
the brick that grows resonant.

Rhubarb in the Garden of Eden,
furious outbursts from peacocks,
round-ovens.

Bibup, the teacher from the next village,
being sick,
an automobile.

translated by David Young

BERLIN 1918

The majority between Zoo,
Potsdam Station, Molken Market,
the Kaiser and the Spanish flu,
happenings and confections,
a dead face in the pillows, October,
all there is to know about bed bugs,
all about the waiter, Albert, the sad
trips to the country, and always
the missing connections,
the childrens' hours before the deluge,
everything nouns, the flu,
Otto the Hunter, the Kaiser, everything
between Holzmarkt Street and the
Militia Canal, November.

translated by Katherine Bradley

GEOMETRICAL PLACE

We have sold our shadow,
it hangs on a wall in Hiroshima,
a transaction we knew nothing of,
from which, embarrassed, we rake in interest.

And, dear friends, drink my whisky,
I won't be able to find the tavern,
where my bottle stands
with its monogram,
old proof of a clear conscience.

I didn't put a penny in the bank
when Christ was born
but I've seen the grandchildren
of dogs trained to herd people
on the hills near the Danube School,
and they've seen me.

And I want, like the people of Hiroshima,
to see no more burnt skin,
I want to drink and sing songs,
to sing for whisky,
and to stroke the dogs, whose grandfathers
sprang at people
in quarries and barbed wire.

You, my shadow,
on the bank at Hiroshima,
I want to seek you with all dogs
now and then
and drink to you
and to the prosperity of our accounts.

The museum is being demolished,
in front of it
I will slip to you
behind your railing,
behind your smile — our cry for help —
and we'll suit each other again,
your shoes into mine
precise
to the second.

TIMETABLE

These airplanes
between Boston and Düsseldorf.
Pronouncing judgments
is hippopotamus business.
I prefer
putting lettuce leaves
on a sandwich and
staying wrong.

WIDELY TRAVELLED

Just beyond Vancouver
the forest starts,
nothing starts,
whatever we fly over
starts.

Everything northern, the way you like it,
a salt grain for whatever runs in the forest,
leather pouches, possibly
for gunpowder, spices, tobacco.

Whatever starts goes very far,
a column of smoke from the Böhmerwald,
a perspective, there are
few people.

SMOKEBEER

Pretzelsellers and deafmutes,
my headlines,
that crouch in the passageway
over a communal beer.

I stare at their conversations,
their modest
and everlasting horror,
my headlines,
my Kennedys,
my Khrushchevs.

HALF

Between cabbage leaves
grows the ceremonious
poppy hour,
a sandy love,
that migrates.
Go! On the bookshelves
the pickles are fermenting,
we can
gather spiderwebs
along the canal
and carry off, unseen,
a pocketful of sand
from the construction site,
we could, if
there were no fences,
go cross country to
Amsterdam.

But
I give you a snail to take,
that will keep a long time.

translated by David Young

A COMMENT ON WILLIAM STAFFORD'S
"A WAY OF WRITING" IN *FIELD 2*

What Stafford describes seems to me more or less what any poet does, and it is a kind of fishing. There may be differences among poets in the way they fish, but whether a poet fishes with a sheet of paper before him, or inside his head while taking a walk, doesn't seem very important. There are also differences in the pace of the poet's activity; for Stafford the pace may be far more rapid, and the work easier, than for another poet, myself, for instance — I am used to waiting longer and actually writing less.

Stafford's practice offers some advantages to a poet, along with a few disadvantages. Among the advantages is this: it allows him to keep up a continuing flow of thought, an inner speech, or dialogue, with the basic material of his writing, and to transfer that speech to the page with a minimum of interruption. But I think it also encourages him to make his poems out of material which is frequently secondary, of a low power, or a low order of thought. He cannot spend too much time on any one poem, on the details of that poem, or the energy might dissipate. This means that in practice he must write many poems, "say" much, in order to bring that sometimes small amount of genuine poetry to the surface and put it on paper.

Stafford's habit of writing may also lead him to write many lines in too ordinary a language, or to bridge vivid expression in a poem with language and material which is essentially filler; for example, the last two lines of the second stanza in the poem "Shadows:"

I looked up so hard outward that a bird
flying past made a shadow on the sky

The implication is that because Stafford looks up hard the bird *must* make a shadow. But I find it difficult to believe in the relationship of the two phenomena; it seems too easy a

correspondence. Similarly, the first two lines of the fourth stanza:

Once I crawled through grassblades to hear
the sounds of their shadows.

This *sounds* deep and mysterious, but if I really think about it, it begins to appear a little too smooth, not thought out enough; even substituting the word "in" for the "of" in the second line would make the lines clearer and more believable. There's a great deal of stuffing in Stafford's poems, and its presence weakens many of them. But this is plainly one of the hazards of his method, and it's obvious from reading his comments that he willingly takes such risks.

I think he is being deceptive when he says that a writer does not draw on a reservoir. Certainly we could get into an endless argument about this, but Stafford's poems themselves, and the poems of almost anyone, to the extent that they are real poems, do draw on a certain reservoir of experience and emotion. Stafford's description of how he writes merely tells us how he goes about drawing on that experience; how he is able by his writing activity to relate more immediate events to this deeper layer of thought and emotion. I mean that the activity he describes would all go for nothing, as it too often does with many younger men, if he did not have this, this *reservoir*, since we must call it something. Even what he is and is not receptive to may to a great extent be determined by things which happened to him before, perhaps long ago, and about which he once had similar emotions.

There is a freshness in Stafford's statement that if a thing occurs to him it is all right. But a noticeable characteristic of his poems is that they are apt to contain things which, though they undoubtedly occurred to him, have also occurred to others, and often in a manner and speech indistinguishable. This approach to writing may be partly responsible for the fact that in Stafford's work generally ideas seem to be weak and ordinary, or there are no ideas at all. Frequently only the inherent beauty

of the expression saves his poems from banality. We expect a poet to tell us something beyond what we already know, and in Stafford's best poems this does happen.

Explicit in Stafford's account is the refusal to judge his own work; the same approach can be seen in his book-reviewing as a refusal to judge other people's work. I make no comment on this further than to say that such an attitude tends to turn book-reviewing, and ultimately, perhaps, all writing activity, into a series of endorsements, easy victories over whatever doubts a man might have about his own or another's writing. Beyond the present literary limits of this refusal we confront an increasingly familiar problem: to what extent may a man refuse to judge, not just his work, but his whole life, and the circumstances in which that life has been lived?

THE MOLE

last of the poets, first of the undead
you must pound a pencil through his heart
before he bites the little seamstress
or gives her life eternal

a poem patched together from calendars.
he detours through graves to kiss
our necks & nests in the intestines'

narrow tunnels: a penniless noble
without even a shadow to wear
out like the second in a two-
pants suit. how do I stop burrowing

into myself according to the legend,
blind. if I am dead I will be buried
with my toes around my neck
like a string of garlic

this is the position for loving myself
I will die just once gnawing
the sober radish of the heart

CHICAGO: NEAR WEST SIDE RENEWAL

sleep was only a dream
Death had of us
now love wakes between its damp walls
in the alleyways
where the blood ran all night
from the wrists of the suicide
from the girl's clever thighs
from the boy beaten by his friends
love, Chicago love,
it was filling the darkened mouths
of the sleepers who rolled
over against their mates once more
the animals under the stairways
the men too with watches on their wrists
love is under
the sullen box of figs
where the flies taste their own sweetness
in the kitchen
love lives in all the rooms at once
too much like the dying miser
I am afraid
to touch the wall that might be
too warm
the house that bore its gifts
through the night
till the wet sun lapped at the windows

what is the good news I should send
of the sealed landscapes corners
remembered by light—
yesterday's body has traveled
over the same bones to the older
man who crawls
his young belly bare against the rug
he raises a hand suddenly dipped

in the sun's fresh golden
spoor who tried to wake only
in the empty lots, to recover his own
spoor before he woke
too late! the roads lick up
every kind of weather. inside, my breath
returned, a tired rider,
hunter, wet with the sweat of his beast.
before the keyhole's half-
lit eye the humid dreams drift like
flawed glass showing the night
we dimly saw, the common death that
stirred under the small crown
of the gas-ring, the domestic sadness
in the wallpaper's distant
foliage. at night a man discards
the day-time face, the flat
map of his globular, primitive heart
he is at home & loneliness is the local
weather.

all night long we built this house
body by body
because after the flesh spreads
its natural foliage
after our roots will only pull up pain
& we refer to ourselves in the plural
your bitterness becomes my bitterness
& it is not enough to nail
a wife in Sunday love or drive
your teeth again & again
into the walls of widowhood
instead you are a day-laborer
the Housing Authority hires
rural white, Southern black, planting
enormous blisters in the palms

you press to the old
walls papered with flowers rippling
under the wrecking ball's rusty sun
the bricks, worm-riddled joists
spineless linoleum & lintels
by which the living left
unused lengths of body preserved
in a permanent coat of fever:
these are our neighborhood broken
breath by breath from our fathers.
forty feet above the broached foundation
only plumbing holds the bathroom
walls painted with the names
of the wrong loves, initials in the hearts
the graffiti a visitor
the lover who was a guest leaves

today the guitar wails from the deep
waters, its thin gut filling.
the frail Mexican
child, foreign even here, waits on
the steps unable to stir
the father
sings in spite of the signs of rain
today they are drowning:
there are antinomies
unresolvable solitudes
against the Mexican's forehead
against the black's forehead the soul
swims . . . these are the first
the asphalt swallows, the terrible
tarpits where the soul founders
unable to survive: our lost
ancestor, the smooth
giant remains uncovered after
centuries. they sink
with sudden hoarse whistlings

acres of fluttering
hairy armor clotting with tar like
black crepe, bodies enormous
as funeral coaches
inside, our own unborn
bodies roll against the walls
already the thin feelers
 the small
hands of the cells climb through the black
bubbles as the huge wrinkled
loins react to the warmth

but there are names
in its many names the concrete cannot
take. the tireless organs
of the piledrivers pump obliviously.
if I will be cousin to the corner-stone
if I put my penis into the blueprint
canister, what future race
in the ruins will trace out our shape
from the twisted template
of the soul, find its orbit
in the clouded atmosphere
of the alloy walls we used as a likeness
for the sky? the workmen stagger
under the weight of the window's nuptial
sheets—in its white reflected clouds
the sun leaves a virgin spot
of joy. these are the celebrations
of the name day & in their nature
the metals we mount as trophies
of the dead ore bleed red
in the rivets & forever stain our rooms
with that mild dawn when an ancient
earth drifted into the galactic
waste which became protoplasm

TIME

Moment to
moment the
body seems

to me to
be there: a
catch of

air, pattern
of space— Let's
walk today

all the way
to the beach,
let's think

of where we'll be
in two years'
time, of where

we *were*. Let
the days go.
Each moment is

of such paradoxical
definition—a
waterfall that would

flow backward
if it could. It
can? My time,

one thinks,
is drawing to
some close. This

feeling comes
and goes. No
measure ever serves

enough, enough—
so “finish it”
gets done, alone.

HABITS

Even in the middle of the night
they go on handing me around
but it's dark and they drop more of me
and for longer

then they hang onto my memory
thinking it's theirs

even when I'm asleep they take
one or two of my eyes for their sockets
and they look around believing
that the place is home

when I wake and can feel the black lungs
flying deeper into the century
carrying me
even then they borrow
most of my tongues to tell me
that they're me
and they lend me most of my ears to hear them

THE REFUSE MAN

I'm going to pull my stinking wagon
through the streets and countryside,
letting it smell up the highways
and its odor crawl into the one
and two family houses along the road
and over the corn and wheatfields
and let the cows raise their heads
from munching to bellow their anger
and the cop to draw up alongside
my wagon—I'll be pulling it
between the shafts — and let this cop,
holding his nose come over to ask
in an awed voice what the hell
it is I'm hauling and I'll tell him,
as sweetly as I can, "A dish of rotted guts,
an empty skull, a fetid breast, a swarming
belly, a corpse, a man right out
of his mother's belly given his occupation,
and I've put myself between the shafts —
a horse will not come near this;
I had to, being a man."

BODY

I

Body — meaning
the given, like
nature — slow automatic
routines, a holding
together, functioning
skeleton, hidden
within flesh, that sweats
and loves within flesh,
slowly altering itself
grown gray
in the equal distribution
of heat,
fashioned after
the Golden Mean, acting
on another body, wet
and alone — body
that hurriedly
covers itself, bored
by the monotony
of use, maintaining
a cheerful appearance
even in old age,
is kindled for a long time
by happiness, everything
fine and dandy ---
interior drama that
forces its way out.
Strong pigment
and mostly uniform
weave: its days are
already numbered.
Its simplicity
is never mentioned.

KÖRPER

I

Körper — das heißt
das Gegebene wie
Natur — langsame Automatik
der Verrichtungen als
Zusammenhalt, funktionierendes
Skelett, versteckt
im Fleisch, das schwitzt
und liebt im Fleische,
langsam sich verändernd,
grau geworden
bei gleichmäßig verteilter
Wärme,
nach dem Goldenen Schnitt
gearbeitet, arbeitend
auf einem andern, naß
und einsam — Körper,
der sich rasch wieder
verhüllt, gelangweilt
von der Gleichförmigkeit
der Übung, doch mit
munterm Aussehn
bei vorgerücktem Alter,
Fröhlichkeit bleibt in ihm
lange angezündet, schön
und gut das alles —
inneres Schauspiel,
das nach außen dringt.
Bei kräftigem Pigment
und ziemlich homogenem
Gewebe sind seine Tage
schon gezählt.
Das Einfache an ihm
ist nie gesagt.

II

For some
only an outline for ideas
and therefore
a vision of higher things,
physiologically a lie,
disguised as a healthy spirit —
body, a drawing
sketched to oppose decay.
carefully laid out
piece by piece
anatomically perfect,
measurable organs,
the open heart
and on the x-ray
the inner fool
not fire-proof, not
burglar proof.
Muscles and limbs
live together.
Hand lies down in hand.
The eye is clear-sighted
for poets, all
in all a splendid
sight, while the slow
conspiracy of time
is at work within,
changing the body's appearance,
ending its excessive life
at last.

II

Einigen
nur Umriß für Ideen
und auf diese Weise
Erscheinung von Höherem,
physiologisch eine Lüge,
als gesunder Geist getarnt —
Körper, eine Skizze,
gegen den Verfall entworfen,
sorgfältig hergerichtet,
Stück um Stück,
anatomisch einwandfrei,
meßbar die Organe,
das freie Herz
und auf dem Röntgenbild
der innere Narr,
nicht feuerfest und
diebessicher.
Muskeln und Glieder
leben miteinander.
Hand legt sich in Hand.
Das Auge sonnenhaft
für Dichter, alles
im einzelnen prächtig
anzusehen, während die träge
Verschwörung der Zeit
in ihm tätig ist und
Ansehen verändert, zuletzt
sein ungebührliches Leben
beendet.

III

Let's see
how things go
for a little while,
uninterrupted
by its constitution
or what passes for one.
Take it as a
complete thing,
let it have its way
which is what it
wants, wait for
the temporary sensations —
if there's no hurry
any time will do —
observe its attempts
to escape, the direction
it goes, disappearing
in the sky
or lost in thoughts
about itself
making unauthorized use
of its qualities:
no mirror of God
not even a painting
in the mirror, when its
glass reflects it — the imprint
of a strange shape,
one motif among others,
mannequin with a soul
that flies from body
to body. The soul
saves up health that
stays on the surface.
It is happy when all
essential functions are
performed with pleasure.

III

Sehen, wie es
mit ihm weitergeht
für einige Zeit,
ununterbrochen
von seiner Konstitution
oder was man dafür hält.
Ihn nehmen als eine
vollständige Sache,
ihm seinen Willen lassen
als seine Gewohnheit,
zu wollen, die provisorischen
Empfindungen abwarten —
wenn es keine Eile gibt,
ist jede Zeit nützlich. —
Seinen Fluchtversuchen
zusehn, der Richtung,
in der er sich
entfernt am Himmel
oder in Gedanken verloren
über sich selbst
unter Mißbrauch von
Eigenschaften:
Kein Spiegel Gottes,
nicht einmal Gemälde
im Spiegel, wenn sein
Glas ihn als Eindruck zurückwirft
in besonderer Gestalt,
ein Motiv unter andern,
Kleiderpuppe mit Seele,
die fliegt von Körper
zu Körper. Gesundheit
erübrigt sie, die bleibt
an der Oberfläche.
Ihr gefällt, wenn sich
die notwendigen Funktionen
mit Vergnügen vollziehn.

IV

Utopia, redeemed, freedom
as stored-up tension —
libido, falling back
from the object to the body
(model of a theory
from the sociologists):
when sperm
leaves it, standing up
or lying down, as usual,
later when it passes water
or when on belletristic
walks the landscape
overcomes it,
my friend the year
walks into distant rooms,
flowers of the season
in his arms, while the body
tries out finer
faculties, like potency,
fixed gleam in its eye
and master of its house,
from parted hair down
completely shaped and taking shape
as if for the first time,
without any impulse to die,
well-being all over
the physique, the figure
limber, steady on
its feet, with no
inclined planes.
A natural future has
begun.

IV

Utopie, eingelöst, Freiheit
als aufgehobene Spannung —
Libido, die vom Objekt
auf den Körper zurückfällt
(Modell eines Lehrsatzes
von Soziologen):
wenn ihn Sperma
verläßt im Stehen oder
Liegen, nach üblicher Art,
er später sein Wasser abschlägt
oder auf belletristischen
Spaziergängen ihn
Landschaft überkommt,
das liebe Jahr
in abgelegene Stuben tritt,
Blumen der Saison
im Arm, während er
feinere Fähigkeiten
überprüft, wie Potenz,
Festglanz im Blick
und Herr im eigenen Haus,
vom Scheitel abwärts
durchgestaltet und Gestalt annehmend
wie zum erstenmal,
ohne Triebtendenz zum Tode,
mit Wohlbefinden
überall am Leibe, plastisch
die Figur, fest
auf den Beinen ohne
Neigungsfläche.
Natürliche Zukunft hat
begonnen.

V

The deadness
inside it,
used-up sensation,
although the eyes
are restless.
Gradually in its
weakness it becomes
a thing:
no longer its own
opposition.
The fully evolved organs —
good for meditation,
adapted to the whole.
All chance abolished
like feeling. Studied
egoism — the art of loving
next to nothing,
life as a table
of useless phrases.
Lust still pulls
the body together
now and then,
before eternity
sets in as a form of leisure.

*translated by
Katherine Bradley
and Walker Cunningham*

V

Das Abgestorbene,
das er in sich hat,
Empfindung abgenutzt,
trotz ruheloser Augen.
Allmählich nimmt er
Sachform an
in seiner Schwäche:
nicht mehr im Widerspruch
mit sich.
Die entwickelten Organe —
zum Meditieren gut,
angepaßt dem Ganzen.
Der Zufall, abgeschafft, wie
das Gefühl. Durchdachter
Egoismus als die Kunst,
wenig zu lieben,
Leben als Tabelle
unnützer Phrasen.
Wollust zieht noch manchmal
den Leib zusammen,
ehe Ewigkeit
einsetzt als eine Form von Muße.

RUTH'S BLUES

for Ruth D. Buffington

1

Blue Ruth: America: "History is your own heartbeat"

I am telling you this:
the tubes in your nose,
in the esophagus,
in the stomach;
the small balloon
attached to its end
is your bleeding gullet;
yellow in the canned
sunshine of gauze,
stitching, bedsores,
each tactoe cut
sewn back
is America:
I am telling you this:
history is your own heartbeat.

2

The Dark Way Home: Survivors

Married to rural goldmines
in southern Minnesota,
your money is land, horses,
cows all of metal:
the area is German;
the religion Gothic, acute,
permanent, in white heat
& telephone wires;
you live with a family where

each issue is food,
where word is appetite
you hunger in: hunting
your slough for teal;
beating your sons with machinery
& your oiled might;
setting your chickens to peck
your children; roping them homegrown
to the tractors & cuckleburrs,
giving them no private thoughts
but rebellion:
fish & hunt for surplus
acreage to corncrib you up,
lutheran or catholic
in taste & ambition;
love grandchildren,
love potatoes,
love beans, love venison,
love pheasant, love berries,
love bass, love rocks
become fossils, love sweetcorn,
shucked in guts, silently
burrowing what grows
but can't love, burgeoning,
lovely, like this.

3

Prayer: Mt Hood & environs

The windows of America
are faceless, incestuous screens
pumiced in pure glass,
triangular, innocent,
wired white hoods
cropped in green grass.

Comatose & armed
explorers brought salt water
from the ocean to boil
in three kettles as an offering;

the Indians smoked
on the mountain trails
in buck heat
high along the Columbia;

Lewis & Clark,
their slave, York,
took their salt up
in their webbing;

the meat now cured,
the lumber stink off
the river,
fertilize no soil
without Indian blood
or red roses.

4

*Good Samaritan Hospital: America: cripples, casualties,
a way home*

The story goes: wide purple
eyes woven in sugar, we add
some vinegar & hot dye;
the non-toxic drip of our
continent on inhabitants
is odorless as lightning;
we hug the tributaries
to our skin of tobacco —
the cotton crop perfectly dry;

the drink is canesugar
which yeasts on the docks,
the blue-black molasses
shucked & popped in the oven.

The best trained cooks
are the best trained spies
who shift the vats where the lab
learns more about blood sugar
& hemoglobin —
black & white ice cream
bins pucker this sexual
imagery; the rarest blood
rose is skinned by white hands;
a garden is a white woman
with a penchant for tropical flowers.
What is the smell of black semen
stuck in white wombs
in 1876 when the troops withdraw?

We explore the illiterate halls
with a photographic eye;
the flick we've made is our bible
for which there's no cost;
we splice in our parts,
"The Birth of a Nation",
a wide angle close-up,
buck, posse, a good horse.

Lovely's Daughters: Visitors

We packed our cuts
& insect bites with rich damp earth.

The breeze swung our own birches
in clots of music.

We ate the tangled punch grapes,
crushed brown bodies in vines.

4 inch nails snagged our blankets,
gowned on the treehouse stair,

bats flew, tangling our hair;
we danced with the spider crayfish.

Naked, on the hot night road,
we squashed fireflies on our chests
as they burned;

fall corn, haymow, cuckleburrs,
the unplowed rocks, hail,
swollen tornadoes cracking

our bedwater;
these centigrade nights
we cuddle our stink to keep warm.

The bees circling,
blood down our legs,
we stuffed soybean leaves in us.

Now we swell in the visitor cove
in the fifth floor scissor-light,
punctured bells on a rope
twenty feet from your door,
six portwind odors
staved in the toxic night;
your grandchildren grow
taut as sandpaper in your
pregnant daughters — one
in serape, one in wood shoes —
we switch the wheel chair
between us, witnesses sworn
under oath, music our own heartbeats,
digging our poetry with our nails.

6

Love Medley: Patrice Cuchulain

“Stirrups, leggings, a stainless
steel slide, a dishpan, sheet,
a thread spool, scissors,
three facemasks, smocks, paper
overshoes, a two-way mirror, dials:”
the head & left arm
cruise out, almost together,
& you drop into gloves,
your own ointment
pulling your legs
binding your cord; the cheesed
surface skin, your dark
hairless complexion, the metallic room,
orchestrate & blow up your lungs,
clogged on protein & vitamins,
for the sterile whine of the delivery

room & your staff of attendants.
It is free exercise when the cord's
cut; you weigh in for the clean up
as your mother gets her local
for her stitches: boy, 6'13".

As you breathe easily, your mother's
mother is tubed & strapped,
hemorrhaging slowly from her varices;
your two dead brothers who could
not breathe are berries
gone to rot at our table:
what is birth but death
with complexity: blood, veins,
machinery & love: our names.

7

Messages: Anesthesia: Blues: 12-8

The tubes in my nostrils
occasionally itch;
an off-red bulbed balloon
sits inflated on my stomach
in the esophagus;
I have not bled near the bulb
since Sunday; their inlets
of apparatus, the goggles of white
shimmering eggs, evening moss,
the haze of abortion, after birth
to let history die.

My surgical nurse has dug
her twins in caesarian section,
black boy & girl, one month
premature: morphine hums
these weatherclocks, cleaning fluid
mopping one cry; the boy dies
on an adjacent stretcher,
the girl lies there but will not
stop breathing; one in a newspaper,
the other a blanket discovered
outside to be cleaned in the nursery:
an eight hour shift is a family line.

I swim in the southwest
corner of the freight elevator,
an annuled, murderous witness
switching cots over two water-bagged floors.

8

Witch wings & skilled hands: the nurse's song

This man is black;
this man is white;
this skin is made up
for third degree burns.

Lennie is painted in;
why is a black man
father of this child;
what is his name?

We lay in blankets
on storage 2x4's
with the nails removed,
beneath us, inflatable mats:

I have these pills;
I can fly to Seattle;
I can marry;
I can give up children;

above my breasts, a mobile,
a dripping nosebleed, the blood
smearing his hairless
chest, painting a crack.

Two eggs slip on the bannered walls,
their yolks blurred like flypaper;
the uterus swells in a flowering nest
while the venous twins thicken.

This spotted discharge creamery,
diet & exercise, whips numb legs
up five flights of stairs:
auburn curls, corsetted, loose gowned.

My children rise up as vapor,
dice on our picnic table;
the matching eyes hum in brown froth,
rhythmic & open as a hang-band.

The yeasty bump rises with the full moon.
White, eight months pregnant,
in the Portland ghetto,
fettters, & a uniform, all black.

Clan meeting: Births & Nations: a blood song

We reconstruct lives in the intensive
 care unit, pieced together in a buffet
 dinner: two widows with cancerous breasts
 in their balled hands; a 30 year old man
 in a three month coma
 from a Buick & a brick wall;
 a woman who bleeds off & on from her gullet;
 a prominent socialite, our own nurse,
 shrieking for twins, "her bump gone";
 the gallery of veterans, succored,
 awake, without valves, some lungs gone.

Splicing the meats with fluids
 seasoned on the dressing room
 table, she sings "the bump gone"
 refrain in this 69 degree oven,
 unstuffing her twin yolks
 carved from the breast, the dark meat
 wrapped in tin foil & clean newspaper;
 the half/black registered nurse
 hums her six years in an orphanage,
 her adopted white family,
 breaded & primed in a posse,
 rising in clan for their dinner.

We reload our brains as the cameras,
 the film overexposed
 in the xray light,
 locked with our double door
 light meters: race & sex
 spooled & rung in a hobby;
 we take our bundle & go home.

This is my son's song: "Ungie, hi Ungie"

A two year old boy
is a blossom in the intensive
care aisle, small as
a ball-bearing,
round, open & smooth;
for a month, in his first
premature hours, his shaved
head made him a mohawk Indian
child, tubes the herbs
for his nest, a collapsed lung
the bulbous wing of a hawk.
Slivered into each sole
is an intravenous solution
to balance his losses
or what they take out
for the lab; the blue spot
on his spine is a birth
mark of needle readings;
the hardened thighs immune
from 70 shots of various
drugs of uneven depth; the chest
is thick with congestion: bad
air & mucus — good air & pure
oxygen; jerky pouch buffalo lungs —
It does not surprise me
when he waits patiently for his
grandmother, over her five hour
painless operation; he has
waited in his isolette
before: the glow in his eyes
is for himself, will & love:
an exclamation of your name:
Ungie, hi Ungie; you are saved.

Sack 'a Woe: Gallstones as History

One's still in, a goose egg's
made its own bile duct;
the 120 wound pearls
season before doctors,
diamonds to be sorted,
etching in pancreas juice;
they photograph this collection
of off-color radishes,
milky & boiled,
for the medical museum.

A gallstone's seed is berry
wild in fuzz, boned
& filleted, cured,
for each special attack.

So many transfusions
have seeded in sediment
the antibodies won't be identified;
a pint of O blood,
pickles from the lab,
a miraculous find;
they pick the unetherized
weedbeds of tissue & stone
for leaks or obstructions;
cut you like mush melon
suckled in worms
picking your liver
& gall bladder
the color of squash.

Jaundice was your tenth
year on the farm;
five conscious hours
they pickax inside;
you float down this aisle
boxed, fingered, eyed.

12

Echoes from swing shift: doctor, doctor is a missionary

The head nurse has whiplash;
her eyes, her ovaries
salute you in the appointment
center; your doctor is fixated,
updating his knowledge, the Congo,
& of you: green humus
clothing, xrays & crusts of bread;
doctor, doctor is a missionary.
In Africa, an open-heart surgeon,
& on your operating table,
his prayers lead his hands
into the marble collection,
the lost gall bladder,
horizontal sutures & your heartbeat
beating the herniated count
to three, as a limerick,
or a chant:
"She's getting awfully
low"; "No I'm not".
The artist in you spins
out a rhyme about cherry,
cherry pie, the price
of your operations;
cherry, cherry pie, without seeds.

The Broadway Bridge: Exits & Visits

We race across this fecal
bridge four times a day
full of exits & homemade
wheatgerm oil, soya flour,
six pairs of tracks,
truckers crinking our necks
for the perfect wingshot.
We move on the elevators
to the odor of cabbage,
wheelchair tracks, walking
crutches with white hair;
with our bible-belt appetites
fishing us in, we hook our arms
to an ox-cart of images,
orchards of fibrous black hair,
a puffy, soiled, diapered complexion;
we drink bedwater for flowers.
On our way home, a pocked
drunk seaman drapes his clothes
on the railing to swing out
for the somersault, into the Wilhamette;
a barge swoops by without motors;
he crawls aboard by arrangement.
The following day his clothes are still
there, weeded & patched & clean;
but for a single goose egg
which might move, you map out
the next move to go home.

History as bandages: Polka dots & moonbeams

One is an igloo
 of whalebone & oil
 & a poisonous gas;
 one is a canoe under water
 laden with wild rice,
 grubs, & Indian arrows;
 one is a banjo
 packed with thin dirt
 in Richmond, Virginia:
 Gabriel: 1800;
 one is a round bubble
 of mustard rock
 broken on an Indian squaw;
 one is a print of a buffalo,
 bearded, masked, made
 musty skinned hair.

The white rectangular
 patchwork covers all these
 national wounds kept
 secretly bound, at night,
 absorbing color & blood & bones
 of all shapes & disguises.

24th Avenue: City of Roses: Anesthesia: 2

You sit, puckered & dry,
 on a wicker chair on our porch;
 the roses & oaks enclose you in
 mists of blossoms & garden

vegetables in your own yard;
sloughs of children are mallards,
your grandson a black & tan goose
with no neck & loose hair,
a pugged bill, unafraid,
who has pulled you back
from death with his own
voice: "hi Ungie, Hi".

I think of the phosphates
that gurgle in the drains
of your eyes, the salts
& vitamins, a stacked deck
on the seven foot shelf,
baked dishes burnished in tubes
of fine print
surrounding the breakfast nook;
sometimes sulphur won't mix
with your thin blood,
you yellow into a spacious bug,
bloom for six hours, nap
or sew or reed nursery-
song patter to sprout at our table.
Yellow again as your liver
shrinks to normal size,
nocturnal buds fusing to rend,
your eyes jelly & slim
in the evening porchlight,
go out in sudden pain,
rekindle, electric as smoke;
we fire our thermostat
measuring your meal & toilet.

Tweedle on Tweedle: Ruth's last child

She leaps on branches
in moccasined feet
with the agility of ice
breaking up in spring thaw;
as the night bulb
frostbite eats her legs
she walks from farmhouse
to farmhouse in kneesox
& ballerina shorts
as the snow grows
after the winter dance.
Planes hawk pass,
southern valley,
& the blue ice
for prints her body
made, choked on field grass,
chewing the cobs, unbucking
the pronged teeth
bored to a paste,
squinting after scratches.

Now she's escaped
death by freezing,
her son backpacked
in diapers & a hat,
small hump with antlers
in the brush,
a birdling with warble
like a thrush;
they disappear on a trolley
going west,

sparkled by the Minnesota
woods, criss-crossed
in their homemade cotton hoods,
airy, bobbing, in a rush.

17

One lives, one dies: both/and: a choice of colors

Wild rice grows along the banks
of your house, stilted
& holding you up;
your gowned daughters squeeze
pimples & curls & magpie
around the kitchen, ironing
& rinsing their mouths —
bass after minnows & frogs;
you think of the twin-grained
children in the intensive care
unit, & their parents,
race-hate, musical machines
that tear at your stitches,
the leadfilling gas from the trucks,
butchers in green smocks
& your own life in the wick
of Christmas pine & pheasants:
almost completely gutted, you count
your three mixed fledglings:
Roland, Stephen, Patrice;
seed, pollen, pine.

Vitamin K: Don't bleed on me

This clots the blood in throat
cancer, a cut, fingered blister
through the neck, a keyhole
of calloused knuckle, a hinge.
We carry it in lungs of glass,
tinted with pastel labels,
sold, outright, as pink
aspirin & fertilizer;
the residue is left for you
bleeders who ache at terror
in your own blood, and in others,
sloughed in gardens & gravesites.

We made an unnatural community
in a thicket
a half mile from the road,
near New London;
fed from our freezer stock full
of rhubarb, moose & corn;
fought the long winter
with snowshoes & ice fishing,
sunflowers, operas
to blow the snow;
the letters that sat at
the roadside frosted with news.

To avoid each other
we sat long hours over coffee
plotting the last thirty years
& our failure, organized
farmers too stubborn to yield;

we spoke of dead relatives
our own age, and their parents
still burying their children
as ours hung on to our gowns;
building our fences & boats,
our lake garden,
the planned year a new home
clotting our blood & our soil.

19

Relapse: Long Lake, Minnesota: Spirit As Wonder

Blood from the varices,
the stool black
as sunburnt wire
threading a portal
bypass retrenching
this blood, *Ruth*,
drawn and quartered
outside, these eyesacks
having seen all fly
in a spiral after dark.

Fireflies sputter
on the face of this lakesite
named for these Indians,
our blood, *Kandiyohi*;
our hearts arrest,
congealed into black flags
of pigment and plastic;
your grandsons climb,
vines in your firefly eyes.

All your own blood gone,
gallstones and bladder,
the varicose veins whose splinters
are nuclear bones,
white black lakeice
and our rotting docks.

Snowmobiles die,
the oaks belch green,
these grey skies break
long sphinctered handles,
your light kindles, eye dots
in the banked snow;

clots of homemade clouds
blacken as your yeasty
blood goes to its hearth
of plastic circuitry —
loved 'til you die
all at once, deer, raccoon,
garden-goose, *Ruth*,
prancing on her wiry wheels:
wondrously fixed at her dancing,
we wait for her last cry.

20

Here Where Coltrane is

Soul & race
are private dominions
memories & modal
songs, a tenor blossoming
which would paint suffering
a clear color but is not in

this Victorian house
without oil in 0 degree
weather & a forty mile an hour wind;
it is all a well-knit family:
a love supreme.
Oak leaves pile up on walkway
& steps, catholic as apples
in a special mist of clear white
children who love my children.
I play "Alabama"
on a warped record player
skipping the scratches
on your faces over the fibrous
conical hairs of plastic
under the wooden floors.
Dreaming on a train from New York
to Philly, you hand out six
notes which become an anthem
to our memories of you:
oak, birch, maple,
apple, cocoa, rubber.
For this reason Martin is dead;
For this reason Malcolm is dead;
For this reason Coltrane is dead;
in the eyes of my first son are the browns
of these men & their music.

(Note: "Alabama" is a song recorded on an *Impulse* recording of the John Coltrane quartet called COLTRANE LIVE AT BIRDLAND; the song was composed while John Coltrane was reading a speech by Martin Luther King Jr. eulogizing four black girls blown up in an Alabama church — Birmingham, 1963 — from the rhythms of King's eulogy Coltrane composed "Alabama" while on a train traveling from New York to Philadelphia.)

CONTRIBUTORS

BRUCE ANDREWS is 22 years old, lives in Washington, D. C., and has just completed a manuscript collection of poems. His poems have appeared or are due to appear soon in *Cafe Solo*, *Paris Review*, *Guabi*, *Penumbra*, and *Blue Suede Shoes*.

MARVIN BELL's poems in this issue are from a book-length sequence to be published next year by Atheneum. Other parts of the sequence have appeared in *Poetry*, *The New American Review*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Virginia Quarterly Review*. A group of them are in a new anthology, *Major Young Poets*, edited by Al Lee and published by World.

PAUL CALLAHAN lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts and studies at the University of Massachusetts at Boston.

ROBERT CREELEY's recent books include *Pieces* and *The Charm* — poems — and *A Quick Graph* — collected notes and essays. Usually at the State University of New York at Buffalo, he is teaching this year at San Francisco State.

GÜNTER EICH, one of Germany's foremost poets, was represented in *FIELD #1* by a new prose poem, "Zaubersprüche." We are pleased to present here a generous representation from his recent work, as well as an important statement on poetics. We regret that considerations of space did not allow us to print the German texts as well. These are, however, readily available. All the poems translated here are from his 1966 volume, *Anlässe und Steingarten* (Suhrkamp Verlag).

Besides writing poems and prose potshots of the kind represented here (a number of which were collected in *The Satirical Rogue on Poetry*, U. of Mass. Press), ROBERT FRANCIS has recently completed an autobiography, *The Trouble with Francis*, slated for publication by the same press.

JOHN HAINES is presently living in Pacific Grove, California. His new collection, *The Stone Harp*, will appear from Wesleyan in March, and a small book of poems, *Twenty Poems*, will be issued by Unicorn Press at about the same time.

JAMES BAKER HALL, a writer and photographer, was at the Cummington Community of the Arts this past summer. Last spring he taught an experimental course in writing and photography at M.I.T. These are his first published poems.

MICHAEL S. HARPER is currently a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study at the University of Illinois, Urbana, on leave from Brown University. His first collection, *Dear John, Dear Coltrane* was published in the Pitt Poetry Series last spring. The second, *History Is Your Own Heartbeat*, is due from Illinois early next year.

GLYN HUGHES' first book, *Neighbors*, published in the U.S. by Dufour and in England by Macmillan, was the Summer 1970 recommendation of the Poetry Book Society and won the Welsh Arts Council Young Poets Prize. He lives in the North of England, and is planning a reading tour in this country early in 1971.

DAVID IGNATOW's collection, *Poems 1934-1969*, was published earlier this year by Wesleyan University Press.

KARL KROLOW's poem, "Körper," appears here for the first time anywhere, but will be included in his next book, *Nichts Weiter Als Leben*, to be published soon by Suhrkamp. Its translation was accomplished by two Oberlin students, KATHERINE BRADLEY and WALKER CUNNINGHAM, as the outcome of a translation project in which they worked with two *FIELD* editors, STUART FRIEBERT and DAVID YOUNG. The result, then, is both an educational experiment and a four-way collaboration.

DENISE LEVERTOV's latest book is *Relearning the Alphabet* (New Directions). She is currently poet in residence at Kirkland College, Clinton, N. Y. Her husband, Mitchell Goodman, has been completing a large compendium of Movement documents and graphics, *The Movement Towards a New America*, to be published this fall jointly by Pilgrim Press and Knopf. The quotation in "Novella" is from Francis Ponge.

THOMAS LUX is the editor of the Barn Dream Press and author of a pamphlet, *The Land Sighted*, from Pym-Randall Press. When we first heard from him he was supporting himself by driving a school bus; just now he is picking apples. He lives in the Boston area.

SANDRA MCPHERSON also appeared in *FIELD* #2. Her book, *Elegies for the Hot Season*, appeared this summer from the Indiana University Press.

WILLIAM MATTHEWS lives in Ithaca, New York, teaches at Cornell, co-edits *Lillabulero*, and had a book of poems, *Ruining the New Road*, published by Random House last March.

JOHN MELLA arranges school curricula into art forms; organizes students and inert matter into art patterns; has appeared most recently in *Poetry Northwest*, *Tennessee Poetry Journal* and *The Little Magazine*; and has "a long reflective piece" scheduled for appearance in *Chicago Review* sometime early in 1971.

W. S. MERWIN has just published, simultaneously, a new collection of poems, *The Carrier of Ladders*, and a new book of prose pieces, *The Miner's Pale Children*, both from Atheneum.

SAMUEL MOON, who teaches at Knox College, writes that he spent the summer "restoring land to native growth and learning to read Chinese."

LINDA PASTAN's first book will be published in the spring of 1971 by The Swallow Press. She lives in Maryland with her husband and three children, and is on the staff of *Voyages*.

A selection of VASKO POPA's poems, in CHARLES SIMIC's translations, will make up a volume called *The Little Box*, to be published by The Charioteer Press in Washington, D. C.

ADRIENNE RICH has published five books of poetry, the most recent being *Leaflets* (1969). She lives in New York City and teaches in the *Seek* program at The City College.

This is GIBBONS RUARK's second appearance in *FIELD*. His first book of poems, *A Program for Survival*, will be published next spring by the University Press of Virginia as a National Council on the Arts selection.

GARY SANGE teaches at Georgetown University, has appeared in a number of magazines, and has recently completed a collection of poems that is looking for a publisher.

DENNIS SCHMITZ appeared in *FIELD* #1. His most recent collection is *We Weep for our Strangeness* (Big Table).

RICHARD SHELTON's collection, *The Tattooed Desert*, has won the United States Award of the International Poetry Forum for 1970, and will be published by the University of Pittsburgh Press in February. He teaches at the University of Arizona and lives in the mountains west of Tucson with his wife and son.

JAMES TIPTON is teaching this year at Alma College in Michigan. He has recently published poems, short stories, translations and reviews in a number of little magazines.

A. M. TRAINOR lives in Dearborn, Michigan. He was formerly a student at Youngstown University, and edited a magazine there.

June 11-1913

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William was riding

much more often

you were home he

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and his head was

very much upset

and he kept his

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